THE KINGDOM THAT MUST BE BUILT

W. J. CAREY

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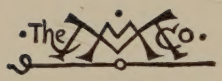

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The Kingdom that must be Built

WALTER J. CAREY, M.A., R.N.

'Thy Kingdom come'

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DEDICATED

TO

THE REV. WILLIAM HENRY CAREY, M.A.

Vicar of the Church of the Annunciation, Brighton

BY WHOM I WAS FIRST TAUGHT

THE VALUE OF ACCURACY IN THEOLOGICAL STATEMENT

AND TO WHOM I OWE THE GREAT HAPPINESS

WHICH SPRINGS FROM

TRUE BROTHERLY LOYALTY AND AFFECTION

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CHAPTER I

THE SEARCH FOR REALITY

WHETHER it is because one grows older and therefore wiser, or because one becomes disillusioned with the ordinary objects of the world's desire, such as money or pleasure or fame, the fact remains that there often comes to us at last a passionate longing for things that are true and simple and lasting. The world as such seems so pathetically interested in the transitory; politicians, publicists, business-men, in fact most people, stake so much on what is uncertain that at the last they seem to have missed any true or real values in return for all their effort and pain.

A few principles seem to stand out, like great rocks which never wear away, and a life built on them cannot be altogether wasted; but even they need some further background if they are to have their full value and interpretation. They contain a measure of eternal validity, but unless we can 'hitch them to a star' which explains them and gives them immortality, there remains something tragic in their short-lived sweetness. Among these I reckon as primary the love of friends, the apprehension of

beauty, and the consciousness of benefit or happiness given, and duty done.

When we are young we reflect but little, we take and give love without much consciousness of anything but joy. But as we grow older we appreciate far more deeply the unexpected extent and worth of love, and grow more kindly and discerning as to the essential goodness which lies in most human hearts.

Who of us is not conscious of unexpected kindnesses and loyalties often from the most unexpected quarters, and from those we may have considered mere acquaintances? And in the deepened form which affection assumes in our family circles, and in the long and tried friendships of our lives, we came to see one of life's great goods, something that savours of eternity, something which will always be a possession, something which has made life worth living.

Again, to many of us the Spring means something which it certainly did not mean twenty years ago. The stretches of colour in some old garden beneath the mellowed red brick wall; the glimpse of the laburnum and lilac flinging their gorgeous freshness to the very depths of our souls; the deep red heart of the rose, or the waves of yellow corn in the quiet field speak to us in a language not previously understood. They fill us with a delight which compels us

to silence, they whisper of some unapprehended beauty of which we only capture a fringe. We can say with Horace 'Vixi,' I have lived my life: let to-morrow bring what it will, I have felt enough to justify life.

Or again, we can do but little to influence the wide tide of human life, yet sometimes the waves toss to our feet some shipwrecked life. If we turn away from the jetsam of humanity because its succour demands money, time, and sympathy, we bear with us the remorse which dogs us when we have had our opportunity and have thrown it away. The satisfaction of a job well done; the joy that accompanies the making of a useless into a useful man; of turning some minor chaos into order; of making some child happy or some widow free from anxiety —these things also have something final about them as if we had co-operated with some supreme Will whose policy we were fulfilling.

Therefore, I reckon these three things as real 'goods' of life, because no life is wasted which has found and used them, and because they have that quality of finality and objectivity which make them good in themselves.

Yet even these things are unsatisfying. They hint more than they give. Is love to be bounded by life? Is beauty only created beauty? Is usefulness

to be only on so small a scale? It is inevitable that we should wistfully yoke ourselves to all those past dreamers and idealists who want more because they feel they are made for more, who find the sample so satisfying that they need a reality boundless in extent and quality and able to satiate the soul of man. So it is that all religion has premissed, and the Christian religion has professed to reveal, that the hints of love, beauty, and goodness flow from the Reality we call God; that He is the source of them all; that He wills us to enjoy and use them; that immortality is given us to fulfil ourselves in them. Eternal life does not then mean mere length of days, just a dragging out of an interminable unsatisfied existence, but the opportunity and capacity of knowing love and being lovers; of apprehending beauty to its uttermost; of entering into holiness and living it out in the company of God and the Blessed.

And if we are to enter into this secret we must find God, Who is the Source and Sum of all love and beauty and goodness, for it will be by sharing His Life that we shall find our real life. Goodness, love, and beauty are not separate from God, or creations of God. God is them, though more than them; they are His nature which expresses His Personality. We therefore must find Him and be in Him

if these endowments are to be ours. We must not merely aim at gaining those qualities; they are already in us in germ, because the life of God is in every man already in germ. We have to raise those powers to their fullest extent by a deeper union of our personalities with the Divine Personality. If we can be united with God, then we shall find ourselves lovers, apprehenders of beauty, natives to holiness; we shall not be seekers after individual qualities, we shall find the qualities because of our union with the Source of the qualities.

Then at last we shall love with God's love, see beauty with God's eyes, create and work and be holy with God's power and God's capacity, because, although I remain I, yet God is in me and I in God.

How to find God, how to be one with Him, how to love as He loves, how to apprehend as He apprehends, how to be like Him, how to do His will and His work—here is our problem.

And this is where increasing age and experience helps us. For if all this be a dream, then all life is a bad dream. For the pleasures of sin, and the pride and objects of the world, are seen to be so obviously futile and wearying. What lies ahead of lust save satiety, of cleverness except the conviction of ignorance, of fame except chance and uncertainty, of life except old age and decay? And even with

the more real goods of life, what lies before love and beauty except death and cessation, unless they be linked on, through God, to eternal life and loveliness? Youth through its inexperience sees the future in a golden mist; middle age sees the landscape without its haze, and knows that unless there be a future and a God all things tend to weariness and unprofitableness, or at best to silence, decay, and death. Can we then find God? Must man be ever a seeker and never a finder? Can we hitch on to eternity here and now so that the half-goods of life become whole-goods, because they are now seen to be the seeds which shall one day ripen to a golden harvest?

The writer believes that it is possible to find God; to begin a union with Him here that shall be eternal. And if this is true it redeems life, because no good thing here is wasted: the bread may be cast on the waters but it shall return after many days. No love that is true love shall ever die, it came from God and is immortal; no beauty ever apprehended is lost, it was but a glimpse of something eternally true; no goodness learnt or shown is futile, for it proceeded from the character of God and remains in Him.

Our task, then, is to open our eyes wider, to expand our hearts more fully, to let our work be on the grander scale, for nothing good comes to nought.

We are right to aspire to love as God, to see as God, to be like God, to work for God—for He has left us means whereby if such are our ambitions they shall be satisfied, for the good things which God has prepared for them that love Him exceed all that we can desire.

CHAPTER II

GOD AS FOUND BY THE MYSTIC

LET it be granted then (as we used to say in learning Euclid) that many, if not most, men and women become weary of the prizes which the world, the flesh, and the devil offer, and begin to grope after those visions of truth, beauty, and goodness which, though transitory and dim, yet are perceived to be valuable.

The pleasures of worldliness are obvious, but easily exhausted. Wealth to a worldly man may indeed mean unlimited dinners, cigars, a motor-car, travelling first-class instead of third.

But nobody can be permanently satisfied thus, for you get to the end of these things so soon, and repetition only produces satiety. That is why most of the desires of youth are so pathetic: a boy wants the obvious satisfactions; it may be cigarettes, ices, tennis—or, alas, it may be indiscipline (falsely called liberty) or lust. The pathos lies in the belief that such satisfactions will ever really satisfy, that the soul of man will ever be fulfilled by such paltry or perverse nutriment. The truth is that we are never satisfied by the obvious or the exhaustible. No man can drink from a shallow river. Take away the un-

fathomable, the mysterious, the background, from *anything*—marriage, friendship, art, music, religion —and it ceases to satisfy. That is why sin, besides being evil, is so stupid. It is finite, and the finite can never satisfy a soul made to capture infinity. Oh that the young could learn this! from what intolerable dullness it would save them. They think, for instance, that lust is romance; they do not know that because lust is finite, because it is easily satisfied, because it has no mystical background, it becomes as stale and wearisome as the constant repetition of a poor piece of music.

That is the reason why people seek religion. It is because the goods offered by the materialist, the sensualist, or by ordinary worldliness are so poor and profitless, stale as yesterday's vegetables on the sun-baked counter of an East End shop. And from time to time there comes a flash, a glimpse. At the graveside of a friend when the great solemn words are said; at some tale of heroism when tears start to the eyes; at some grand spectacle, such as a procession of battleships in line ahead; at some vital moment of decision—life suddenly takes on a horizon. There are adventures and possibilities not seen hitherto. There are spaces in life not yet explored, where Romance dwells, where Beauty reigns, where perhaps God after all lives and is sovereign.

And when a man has once seen that vision, he can never be quite the same. He must set out now to see if there is anything real in the vision. For alas, poor soul, the vision must be real or else he is undone, for it has taken away his pleasure in the old things. If the vision is untrue, still it has spoiled his taste for the old pastures: one glimpse of Venice has made Market Dulborough impossible.

Yes; man's incurable appetite for the mystical, the unexplored, the unattained, alone explains why human beings are always being driven to pilgrimage; to leave the attained for the unattained, the obvious for the unobvious.

But as we brace ourselves to set out to find truth, beauty, perhaps God Himself, we discover among ourselves mysterious people—people who have not found God, but God has found them. It may be that once they were pilgrims and seekers, but they are so no longer. They have found; they have been found; they have arrived. Now this book is not written for them. It salutes them, it acknowledges them, it congratulates them, although it criticises them too if they think their experiences entitle them to disregard the ordinary Christian's 'great high-road to Christ,' or if they think that theirs is the only experience that counts. For a mystic is not necessarily a Christian. There are true mystics among

Mohammedans and Buddhists who have been found by God, but have not found Christ yet. But we must allow for mystics, who are indeed a living confutation of materialism and an unconquerable fortress of spirituality.

But the reader must beware of thinking that you can force yourself into being a mystic, or that the mystic's experiences are necessary for salvation or for a true discipleship to Christ. God reveals Himself overwhelmingly to some for His own purposes; He does not ask everybody to travel that road.

Let us analyse a mystic. He is one whose spiritual perceptions are abnormal and excessively acute. He is frankly bored by the material, except as a vehicle to the spiritual. The limitations of the material fetter his spirit; he must get to the spiritual, of which the material is at most the expression. A landscape or a mountain, a symphony or a picture, the spring or the changing skies, are but veils through which a Presence strives to reveal itself to the soul. To some this Presence is Reality, Truth, Beauty—call it what you will; to the Mohammedan, the Jew, the Christian, it is personal, it is God. And the soul is content, for it is in living touch with Reality, with the Only-Thing-That-Matters. Life and death, poverty or riches, pleasure and pain—

what are they but accidents in a life which is secure because it is 'oned' to the Reality at the heart of things.

Nature and life are but parables to such. The bursting of the buds, the flowering of the hedges, the swelling ripeness of the corn, the full-bosomed foliage of July are but expressions of the Life which is above, beneath, around—a Life of which they are part, with which they have made terms, in whose bosom they are secure. They value human things—love, friendship, flowers, birds. But the value is not disconnected from the Source. God gives it to them, they accept it at His hands; they thank Him for His gift. But they would accept pain or poverty as gratefully as pleasure or wealth—it's the Source that matters, not the gifts. Take from the mystic (but you can't) the conviction of his unity with the ultimate reality, and you have inflicted the mortal blow; for the essence of his mysticism is that neither life nor death nor any other creature can separate him from the inexhaustible loveliness and treasure of his Possession. What wonder that such a man is placid and happy. Every new experience is but a deepening of his exploration of the infinite character of His Friend; every trial is but a welcomed test of his own loyalty and love. He cannot be touched by attack or criticism. What has the

voluble atheist to teach him? Nothing: the atheist simply hasn't known or felt, that is all. What has the materialist to offer? Nothing: the poor dullard is asleep, and actually thinks that the very finite joys of the jug of wine and the lady in the wilderness [1] can be compared with the ever-fresh, ever-stimulating, inexhaustible joys of the divine friendship and the divine revelation.

Passion, ambition, fame, jugs of wine, companionships of women—what are these if divorced from the one Reality behind all; whereas, if once you find and are found by that Reality, every bird, every beast, every running brook, every flower of the wayside murmurs to you with a thousand tongues the fascinating secrets of the life and love of the God Who is yours, and Who will lift you increasingly for ever into the heart of His own eternal existence.

Such then is the mystic. He is here, and he is real, and he is invulnerable. He walks about among us, but he sees and hears things that we don't, that is all. Who are we to sneer at him, simply because he is a spiritual genius? And indeed life without him and his outlook would be intolerable. It is the touch of mysticism which saves all. If we were all successful men of business of the sort which talks in terms of money and possessions; if we were all

[1] *Cf.* Omar Khayyám.

healthy and prosperous and knew nothing of pain or poverty or anxiety; if our ideas were bounded by prosperity and the obvious goods of this world: I think we should hail anything—even the most bloody revolution—which stirred life from the deadliness of complacent optimism. So the mystic is very valuable, for he is the interpreter to us of the Reality which lives behind things, but we have to beware lest our admiration for him makes us despise the common man for whom Christ died, and whom ' God must love because He has made so many of them.'

For the mystic road is in truth but for the few. The rest of us can use no special road or any short cuts, we must travel the old, long, dusty road of duty done and religious observances performed. We must follow the ordinary signposts and sleep at the usual inns.

It is God's Will, and therefore good for us that we travel in company with the ordinary mass of humanity, seeking God as they seek, taking the risks they take, weary with their weariness, and at last satisfied with their satisfaction.

We must think over the ordinary stock arguments, we must enlist in the ordinary way, start from the same rendezvous, follow the beaten track of ordinary duty and common devotion, quite sure that He whose delights are with the sons of men will lead

His travel-stained and dishevelled army along the dusty hot roads just as tenderly and surely as He leads the mystics over the crags on the mountain-top.

We shall find that the stages of the pilgrim road have well-marked stretches and definite names. There must be a right faith, a ready obedience, divinely-ordered methods of keeping in touch with our Guide. These we shall consider one by one, but first of all we must have a talk with the pilgrims, on the eve of starting, as to the reasons why we are willing to trust our Guide and to follow Him unquestioningly through paths which are difficult and unknown, and towards a land which seems very far off.

CHAPTER III

WHY WE TRUST OUR LEADER

THE ordinary man or woman who is no mystic, or is blessed with very occasional mystical glimpses, must then be prepared to look for God along the ordinary routes of thought and patient seeking. Not for such a one is the high-level road of abnormal and acute perception. We must be patient in our search for God, and if we find signposts along the road which seem to help us to Him we must follow them ploddingly and perseveringly. Such a signpost, if I may anticipate, is conscience. We cannot find God, if we willingly and rebelliously ignore or defy its leading. A man who complains that he cannot find God while all the time he is living a life of sin or carelessness is simply out of court. He will not look at the directions: no wonder he has lost his way.

But many a beginner may rightfully ask, 'Why do you believe there is a God at all?' And I think we must be able to give our answer. Especially in wartime people ask this question—sometimes defiantly, as if it would ease them if they knew the desperate truth that there was no God; sometimes pathetically, as if they wanted to believe but found it hard to keep

their faith. Personally, I find it no harder to believe in God in war-time than at any other time. For it seems strange to charge upon God the responsibility for free men who deliberately refuse to act upon the rules and directions He has given. 'Love God,' He says, and 'love your neighbor as yourself.' Nations never act upon these directions; they think you a sentimental fool for even thinking such advice in any way practical. They have their reward in war and hatred, and then they seem to want to blame God for what would never have happened if they had listened to Him.

Besides, I do not think that God's principal wish is to keep us alive. To maintain in being the largest number of fat, cowardly, self-indulgent people does not seem a very divine task. He wishes to teach us how to live, whether our life is long or short; He wants us to learn self-sacrifice, devotion, and unselfishness, and if we have learnt them we are ready for the next stage of existence, whether our life is long or short. We can be a good deal prouder of Englishmen in 1918 than in 1913, I think. But in any case war at most only raises the question of God's existence and goodness in a special and more acute form: the reasons which make for belief in Him are perennial and can be stated.

Apart from mystical experience (which however

must not be underrated), we start with the suggestions which human psychology—the study of the human mind and soul—gives us. We find as a matter of evidence that most men either believe in, or are curious about, a higher Power. Why? 'Oh,' says the sceptic, 'it is only a primeval instinct to worship your ancestors.' But why do men want to worship their ancestors? Why does humanity possess an instinct to worship something? It is not the ancestors who are worshipped that interest us, but the fact of an instinct of worship in humanity. There must be something in it, we say; something not to be explained away, but explained. We find, as a matter of hard fact, when we examine humanity's mental and spiritual outfit, that it does almost universally include a belief in (or an apprehension of) a higher Power which created things: a power of perception of a better and worse in things which we call conscience: and a faith that death is not the end of life.

These three elements emerge everywhere. You find them in the Greeks, the Romans, the Egyptians, Babylonians, Assyrians: they appear in a startlingly distinct form in the Jew. You find them in the savage and the ordinary unsophisticated Englishman alike. I do not say that the existence of these psychological elements absolutely proves that there are

realities corresponding to them, but it takes us a long way. The obvious instincts for food, drink, sleep, most certainly have correspondent realities by which they are satisfied. And if it is so with the instincts of the body, why not with the soul? At least I could never be an atheist; to deny flatly the existence of a possible reality which corresponds to the immemorial instincts of the human soul strikes me as such impudence. At most one could leave it an open question.

And secondly, we buttress this psychological evidence by history. Has the God to Whom instinct points as existing, and to Whom conscience points as Good, ever revealed Himself in an unmistakable way to those who seek Him? Here we are met at once by the evidence of a revelation which is said to have been given to the Jews through prophets, and to Christians by Christ.

The prophets gave a preliminary and anticipatory message, it is said, but in Christ God manifested Himself to the world and lived among men that He might reveal His character to those who sought Him; that He might redeem them from their sins, and might endow them with a new and supernatural power to make them god-like and raise them to heaven.

Now we believe this revelation is true. It seems

to us absurd to say that the vast and rich spiritual experience of the Jews is simply self-deception. Are the psalms written by liars or visionaries? Is the noble poetry and passion of the prophets self-hypnotism? Their teaching and their experience has been of such priceless profit to the education of the world; their intuitions harmonise so completely with the perceptions of good men that we believe them true. Not final, but part of the finality: a real revelation of God. And as the climax of their life and teaching we reach the Christ. There is this life written down, totally uninventable—we think—by fools or frauds. And side by side with the perfect life are the complete claims. He was executed for blasphemy because He made Himself equal with God. Surely the Jews have a right to know what they crucified Him for, and they stated that as their reason. And He told His disciples that He would not be overcome of death, but would rise from the dead, not only that He might be a justification for their belief in immortality, but as a proof that He was true.

We believe He did so rise. Otherwise why does the Church exist? Why did the Apostles who failed on Good Friday succeed after Easter Day?

If a man takes ship to America because he fears that England will be beaten in the war, but forty days later is back in England and at the front—

openly and triumphantly asserting that England will win—you may be sure that *something* has happened in those forty days.

Nothing accounts for the existence of the Church—nothing explains the almost arrogant confidence of the Apostles except the Christian story. He rose; they saw Him; it was enough. We stake all on the Resurrection: if that is true, it carries the rest. Jesus Christ is God revealed as Man.

But we do not rest even here. Our whole faith does not stand on psychology plus history. We bring the results to the bar of experience. Does the faith work in practice? Does it give men peace, power, and light, unknown before? Now that is what every man *must* test for himself; we can only be witnesses and abettors. We cannot do the whole work for anybody: each person in the loneliness and solitude of his soul must try it for himself.

We can only say that we have tried it. A Christian saint will tell you, very humbly and with sincere acknowledgment of his failures, that he is—by the faith and power of Christ—learning to overcome fear, to resist self-indulgence, to exercise kindness. Where the world fails through lust, and worldly men can do nothing except suggest licensed houses of ill-fame where women shall be official slaves to the vilest passions of men, he will tell you that by

the power of Christ he has been able to exorcise the evil spirit and to learn the blessedness and peace of self-control. Where the world seeks fame and success and each man treads on another in order to mount to the top—where fame is seen to be but a bubble—he will tell you gratefully that he has no desire to rise by another man's fall, and is content with the peace and the pleasures which are given to every humble and simple mind. When the world is only conscious of unsatisfied desires, he knows the power and peace of friendship with God. You have to make a judgment of value, in fact. Does a genuine and sincere following of Christ give you the sense of something eternally valuable and good, or do you think that the lusts and passions and ambitions of the world are the things that count and the things that last?

The saints have made their choice: lesser men believe they are right, and follow them as they can. But even they can give their testimony. They find that to follow Christ is to find a new peace and a new power. They shrink from the futile and brief objects of the world's desires. They cannot make others see things with their eyes or feel as they do in their hearts; but they are sure for themselves, and wish that others would make the same venture as they have made.

They have considered psychology and history, but have carried the result into the testing-house of life and experience. Of the result as it leaves the testing-house they can only say that whatever shadows may still lie on the fringes of their faith as regards details, of the main body of their Christian faith they have simply no doubt at all.

CHAPTER IV

THE BUILDING OF A KINGDOM

IS all over when we have found, or have been found of God?

The mystic's danger is here, that he remains a dreamer. It is quite right to see visions and dream dreams, but it is both unchristian and fatal to be only a dreamer or a visionary. The mystic (especially the Indian mystic) is so enraptured by his vision of God that he cannot be bothered to come down to human levels or to waste time in dealing with human lives. He is like Tennyson's ideal mother, who—

> 'On tip-toe seem'd to touch upon a sphere too gross to tread.'

But Tennyson, because he was Western, brings the mother down to practical, everyday life—

> 'Not learned, save in gracious household ways,'

but the household ways are there. She finds no incompatibility between treading the heights of spirituality and seeing that dinner is punctual. The Indian mystic is otherwise. You find him—at least in their ideal—lost in dreams in some hermit's cave among the mountains, or standing motionless in the

forest until his beard mingles with the leaves at his feet and the birds perch on him as on a figure of stone.

The roar of the great tide of human life never reaches his ears; he is done with the folly and the passions or cares of men. But it is not so with the follower of Christ. 'God so loved the world'; the Saviour moves among men. He can save a wedding feast from disaster by replenishing the failing supply of wine; he weeps at the death of His friend; He moves respectfully and compassionately among the lepers and the harlots; he is content to be called the friend of sinners. And His followers must do the same: our responsibility for our brethren can never cease. Some may retire into the silences of the world for prayer, but it will be that they may reinforce with hard-won spiritual power the enfeebled forces of the world's life. Some then will pray in solitude, others will mix with men and work for them, but all alike are thinking not only of the glory of God, but of glorifying God by the uplifting of human life.

For indeed the vision of God and the love of God is but half the battle. The very gifts and graces of God are not only ends in themselves, but are the equipment for a campaign. The Christian does not, and ought not to, rest in the luxuries of the favours

of God; he must go out into the world to do God's work and to build God's Kingdom.

Who can tell how much harm has been done by the notion that Christianity means only the vision of God and the saving of one's own soul? 'When thou are converted, strengthen thy brethren,' is of the very essence of the Christian charter. Our task is not to be always fussing about our own souls and to be 'keeping our own feet warm.' We must of course get right with God, or we shall have no message to bring and no power to put behind it. But having found Him we cannot rest at that; we must go out into the world, even as Jesus came into the world, in order to fight God's battles and to build God's Kingdom upon earth. That Kingdom may never be completed here, but it must be begun here. That Kingdom exists ideally in heaven, just as the Church existed potentially and ideally in the Risen Christ before there was a single baptized member, but it has to be realised and fulfilled on earth.

And this is the Christian's job: to go out into a world that is not Christ's and turn it into a world which is His. Ideally, again, this is the work of the Church: to include the world in itself until the world is become the Church of Christ. But so often the actual working Church disappoints us by the failures and selfishness of its members, so that our building

of the Kingdom must include the reforming of Church abuses as well as the regeneration of the world.

And what a task! Surely there is not a minute to waste. We look round sadly on the disunion of Christendom: the worldliness of Christians, their alliance with the worldly world, their lack of zeal, their poverty of holiness and of high ideals. We scan the whole area of human life and find everywhere slavery, misery, prostitution, lust, vanity, hopelessness, selfishness, and wretchedness—poverty that degrades, scepticism that chills, worldliness that carries within it disillusionment, impotence, and despair.

We look inside our own souls, and even if we think we are clear from great moral deformities we find only too much to lament of cowardice, selfishness, poverty of noble ambitions or hopes.

So it is in these three spheres that we have to build the Kingdom. No time for dawdling, no leisure for excessive preoccupation with ourselves, we must hurry towards the battles that *must* be fought. No time for funk-holes, no possibility of escaping service: we *must* fight, we must build, or take our place for ever with those who have not known the things which belong to their peace, and so have missed the very end for which they exist.

It is to fighting we are called; it is to build that we are sent. Let no man call himself a Christian who is neither fighting nor building. He is deceiving himself; he is but a useless mouth, one who shuts himself up in his house and pores over his paltry *objets d'art* while outside the rumbling of guns tells where the true stalwarts are facing the real bloody issue.

Three fights at least are before us. The fight to find the Real God—the Father and Friend, the Saviour and Redeemer, the Comforter and Inspirer. Here will be experienced all the agony of thinking and praying and striving, and the effort to bring out into the light all the godlike qualities of our nature. Then there will be the second fight: the stern struggle to overcome the evil that is in all of us—the lust, the laziness, the cowardice, the paltry selfishness.

Then while we wrestle with our internal difficulties—those difficulties which lie in the rear, so to speak—we must yet press on to the third fight, the great constructive fight—the building of the Kingdom. The Church to be united and her faults reformed; the world to be evangelised and converted. No peace this side of the grave except the inward peace of God, which though it passes all understanding yet bids us not to rest even in itself, but through

it to brace ourselves to further effort and fiercer fighting.

As long as we are imperfect, as long as the Church is weak or stained, as long as a child cries for food, or a fallen woman for her lost purity, or a man for relief from a life which is a slavery, we cannot make peace or lay down our arms.

Let us proclaim it far and wide, for a self-absorbed Christianity will win no recruits nor fire a single heart.

Blow the trumpet for the battle, make clear the objects at stake, and armed men will spring from the soil. But if we omit the building of a Kingdom and reduce Christianity to the vision of God and the saving of our own souls, we shall never gain recruits for a warrior Church. We shall have mystics and quietists, and a host of people who forget that religious self-absorption is still selfishness; but we shall not enlist those warm-hearted and generous souls who feel in their very bones that religion, if real, must be unselfish and other-regarding, who, while they would be willing to join in a campaign against the cruelty and tyranny by which human life is oppressed, are yet unwilling to join in a search for God which only seems to result in religious narrowness and selfishness.

Ask them to join in the fight for human freedom

and health, send them to God for the necessary vision and inspiration, direct their energies towards plain and direct issues, and we shall win recruits. If the Church were manifestly a Brotherhood in Christ, whose unselfish object was to redeem human life, it would not lack supporters and friends. But is it? Is the ordinary congregation manifestly a body pledged to redeem human life by the power of God? In its best elements, yes. But how often merely a collection of camp-followers who languidly attend services and in action do nothing. Little jarring sets, criticism of anything unconventional, a pulling to pieces of others, a stiff and cold respectability and conventionality, a resentment of any encroachment on petty but fiercely defended privileges, an unwillingness to welcome new-comers because they take up the room or lessen the spacious ease of the old tenants—such are far more common than burning zeal and self-forgetting labour to build the Kingdom.

If we were really on fire to build we should have no time for pettiness, our churches would be no longer 'consecrated ice-houses,' which suffer from no rebuke except when growing life makes some mistake of zeal.

But whatever our past mistakes, our future campaign must be clear-tongued. 'Come and build'

we must cry to all who will listen. Equip yourselves with the vision of God and the power of Christ, and then come and work. We have to uproot a thousand evils, and the bad habits and cowardly acquiescences of centuries. Degrading poverty, ill-paid labour, bad conditions, sexual disgrace, joyless lives, aimless selfishness, callous luxury, must be rooted out so that the ground may be cleared for the building. Then we can get to work to lay the foundations of the Kingdom, where God rules in every heart and men and women live in the true freedom, true righteousness, true love and true joy which constitute the glorious liberty of the children of God.

CHAPTER V

FIRST EQUIPMENT—A RIGHT FAITH

WE are then asking men and women to enter a campaign for the regeneration of human life. They would go with us so far, I do not doubt. 'Do you approve of human beings living in crowded rooms in unhealthy streets?' 'No.' 'Then stop it. Only vote for a candidate in your borough council who promises to deal with the housing question.' Or again. 'Do you approve of women sacrificing their most sacred instincts and living short, diseased, and shameful lives in order to satisfy the weakness or lusts of men? Would you like your sister to be one of them?' 'No.' 'Then stop it by persuading your friends to diminish the supply by ceasing to make the demand.' Or again. 'Would you like to live and bring up your family on twenty-five shillings a week?' 'No.' 'Then persuade your Employers' Union to treat their employees as human beings, who are more important than anything else in the world, and have the right of every one of God's creatures to conditions that make life worth living.' Once more. 'Do you like music, games, clubs, good food, open spaces, decent holidays?' 'Yes.' 'Then try—through Parliament,

local councils, voluntary associations, as well as by your own example and efforts—to obtain these things for all men.' And finally. 'Do you find peace and power through your faith in God and your union with Jesus Christ?' 'Yes, emphatically I do.' 'Then endeavour to persuade men by example and by word that men will never be satisfied by bread alone, nor by holidays or leisure or decent pay, for they have souls as well as bodies and minds. Bring them to God for the satisfaction of their deepest needs and longings, teach them that a healthy body is not sufficient, nor even a well-stocked mind. The soul is the crown of man, and God the satisfaction of the soul.'

Such, I believe, is the programme which Christ by His teaching and example sets for us. But immediately we leave the region of talk and get to action we find our own powerlessness. For the forces of the world, the flesh, and the devil are so strongly entrenched; human nature is so hard to move, that it is only those who are thoroughly equipped for the task who can escape weariness and despair.

We talk of reforming the abuses of the Church. We find in action that the purging of one simple and scandalous wrong means the moving of mountains

and a desperate carrying of trench after trench, with failure, perhaps, at the end through some legal quibble or some personal intrigue.

Or we expect to find that the members of Parliament or of our borough council are inspired with a single-minded aim for the betterment of the people. We find in action how gang sticks to gang; how many and how deep are the ramifications of personal ambition or personal gain. You find yourself discredited, accused of corrupt motives or swelled-head; you are a nuisance to your easy-going friends and an obtruder to vested interests—you are lucky if after years of toil you get one quarter of your programme even considered.

And if you are out for the victory of Christianity, of Christian morals, of Christian life, you will find how variable is human nature. The best men have their weaknesses and failures: the masses confront you with a hopeless indifference to their own welfare, and a desperate inclination to the easy paths which spoil and degrade human life. Life is saved by effort, and effort is the one thing humanity will not make. So the reformer grows weary: the Thames is as far off conflagration as ever: human nature is so slow that he despairs. His energies flag, his message ceases, his heart ceases to glow. He will go back to his own little domain and build a

wall round it, and try to forget the tragedy and sordidness of the life which surges outside. How many an ardent reformer has become a cynic; how many a socialist or radical is now the most complacent of reactionaries?

So Christ has provided a most careful training for His reformers. They are to be equipped in certain ways. They must believe this, obey that, keep in living touch with Him by certain means, so that no disappointment can weary them, no discovery disillusion them, no difficulty daunt them. Others may fail, they shall not; for they draw upon a constant reserve of strength that shall never fail them. They must have a right Faith to inspire them. They must know and keep His laws. They must use prayer as a means of touch with His mind and spirit. They must use the Sacraments as points where their life is in living contact with His.

Such is the Christian equipment, without which the Christian builder will build in vain. Let us take them one by one and see what they mean, and how they help us to fight.

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First, a right Faith. We must firmly hold not only to God as Guide, but to what God has revealed

to us of Himself and of His Work. It is impossible not to believe something. Those who say they disbelieve creeds merely mean that they think the Christian creed is false or over-elaborate. Even the atheist has a creed: that there is no God. You may think the Church's creed is too minute in its details, but a creed is inherent in the simplest teaching of Christ. 'Have faith in God'; 'Ye believe in God, believe also in Me'; 'The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost Whom I will send unto you'—are not these a creed, and the foundations of the Christian creed? The minister who greeted a preacher with the words 'We are not creedal here,' was as faulty in his thought as in his language. The Apostles' Creed pretends to be no more than a necessary elaboration of something which is simply fundamental to the Christian religion and part of the life and teaching of Christ Himself.

No one must think that the Church met to draw up a philosophical statement with which to fetter men's minds. Human beings demand a clear and intellectual expression of their faith—it must be in a portable form. A Church which is going to admit converts must have a formula for new entries. Even the Boy Scout movement finds that; far more the Christian Church.

So the Creed was the baptismal formula. If you

wish to enter, then here is what we believe, and what you must believe if you want to join us. The elaboration of the Creed is due to the inevitable demand of human minds for clearness about its fundamentals; to pondering over the essentials of the Gospel; to the necessity of combating heretical opinions by a clear statement of what had been the faith from the beginning.

But the Creed is far from being a mere intellectual statement of truth: it is also an inspiration.

We would-be reformers, in whose heart the Creed burns, believe that the world is meant to be God's world and not the devil's. Men and women are God's children, created by the Father for joyful and lovely ends, not as machines or lay-figures to be exploited for profit or condemned to drag out a loveless and joyless existence in hideous slums, amid ugliness, poverty, and degradation.

Because men came from God there will be something god-like in them; because the Father loves them, therefore we will not be disappointed with them; because the Father bears with them we can bear with them too. And since Jesus thought it worth while to die for them, we too can serve and suffer. Those for whom the Saviour died are worth our sacrifices as well. We are not alone in our zeal or effort to build, behind us all the time is the Heart

and Presence of the Lord: we cannot, we must not, give in.

And the Holy Spirit is power. When weary we can fall back on the Spirit as a thirsty man goes to the spring, so that our weariness is not perpetual. We may go to bed dispirited, but wake with the glad cry of the undefeated. Think what a difference is made by such a Creed! The reformer who trusts his own good instincts and relies on the perfectability of human nature is always meeting with disappointments, and can fall back on no reserves. But the Christian has unlimited reserves, for God is always there. If one is to enter the great conflict and persevere through the long day, it is only by faith in a Leader Who is unconquerable, and in unseen forces which cannot fail.

So the Church, following its Master, puts faith at the head of our requirements for the field. Unlimited faith in God, in Christ, in the power of the Spirit; this is the first and greatest weapon we have.

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It would perhaps be wise to deal with one common objection to the use of a creed. 'Does it not make hypocrites'—the criticism says—'if we require assent to the Creed from young people, *e.g.,* at

their Confirmation, when it is almost impossible for them to have thought it out?'

Would it not be better to say to them, 'Trust your instincts for God and goodness; take Jesus as your leader, and learn to love and help your neighbor'?

But note that this is a creed in itself: 'I believe in God, in Jesus, in Brotherhood, in unselfishness.' It is a shorter creed, but still demands belief, and makes an enormous demand for thought and development. For a boy of thirteen or fourteen cannot possess very final views of either God or Christianity or Brotherhood.

As a matter of fact, a wise teacher finds little difficulty in the matter. 'The Creed is a statement of the Faith of the Church held by the Brotherhood from the beginning. You will find the doctrines of it in the Holy Scriptures. You will not understand it fully at first. You can be content, as the Catechism teaches you, with an honest belief in God the Father Who made you, God the Son Who redeemed you, and God the Holy Ghost Who sanctifies you and the Church. You can hardly expect that your little mind would grasp at once the truths which were the fruit of the thought and inspiration of the whole Brotherhood. You must take the rest on faith, and trust to time and thought to make them real to you. We will explain to you all we can, and

make things as clear as we can, but you will find that both time and experience are necessary to a full understanding. Yet we dare not teach you less than the Brotherhood has declared to be the truth of God; but we only expect you to grasp it gradually, although you accept it at present on the guarantee of the Brotherhood to which you belong, or wish to belong.'

We allow a large margin to human fallibility and ignorance. We shall not expect a child of twelve to understand the doctrines and meaning of the Virgin-Birth or the Communion of Saints as fully or as deeply as he will twenty years later. Yet the child mind can grasp a good deal. A child need not necessarily understand all the physical difference between virginity and matronhood. Yet he can understand what you mean when you say that Christ was different from us because He was God as well as Man; that He was therefore born in a different way than we were, for He had no human father. By a creative spiritual act He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.

This will be quite enough at the age of twelve. The child will grasp in a real, if vague, sense that Christ was unique—one of us, yet more than any of us. Man, and yet God—and that will do for the present.

So with the Communion of Saints. All of us, we shall say, who are by baptism enrolled in Christ's Army and are members of Christ, are one Brotherhood. 'Some of us are on earth, some in heaven, some in process of being purified until fit for heaven. But because we are all in Christ our Brotherhood is not broken. Those in heaven are still *our* heroes and saints and friends, who care for us and pray for us: those who are being purified are still our brothers for whom we pray: those who are still on earth are our "militant" brothers, whom we should love and help. If we are members of Christ neither death nor distance or anything else should spoil our sense of affection and loyalty to the rest of Christ's family. Always we should love the rest of the family wherever they are and whoever they are.' I do not say that the child will grasp the doctrine with the intensity of a grown-up man who looks to the Saints for prayer and brotherly support, who prays with his whole heart for dead wife or friend, or who, in face of heathendom or materialism, cherishes as his dearest possession the sense of brotherhood with all his Christian brothers and sisters in Christ.

But it will do. The child will grow into the doctrines by experience, just as we grown-ups grow into marriage or socialism, or the life of the Army or Navy—by experience.

All of us take much on trust when we join the Navy, or some social or political party. We grow into things. We have enough faith and enough facts to start on—the rest grows with experience.

So it is with the Creed. We give the child enough to start with. The Creed will grow realer with life's experience. At least we believe and hope so; there is the whole history of the Church to make us think so. But, of course, we must admit that, if the time comes that the man or woman definitely comes to disbelieve the Creed, or any article of the Creed, he has the moral right to leave the Church.

I do not think we should press people too hard in these times. No one can honestly be a minister of the Church who clearly denies any article of the Creed. If he is puzzled about any article I would give him a long time for consideration, provided that he did not teach his puzzlings as the message of the Church.

If he comes to the point when he denies, he must be honest and leave the ministry of a Brotherhood which has a perfectly definite official creed. You cannot be a socialist if you deny a vital article of socialism, and so with churchmanship. The laity might have a still larger margin because they have no teaching office; but even they not only have the

right to leave the Church, but should do so if they definitely deny any vital part of its Creed.

But all that is entirely different from the question of the margin for development obviously allowable to children.

In teaching them the Creed we shall teach them the whole. But some parts are obviously simpler than others. We shall insist on these simpler parts, and teach them the rest as they can bear it, asking them to take something on trust, and telling them that we hope and believe that growing experience and thought will justify to them completely what we have to give them, at present largely on faith, and on the guarantee of the Brotherhood—the living Church of Christ.

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But for grown-ups and for children, the Creed is not just a puzzle or a matter of intellectual exercise. Even its most difficult clauses are but guardians of a positive and passionate faith in a God Who creates, loves, redeems, and saves.

The world has no interest in God—no responsibility to God, and therefore no sense of sin or need of salvation. But believers in the Creed are altogether different. There is a God behind things. It

is His Will that matters, His love that saves, His power that conquers evil and liberates the world. A man or woman will be quite different according to whether they can say, ' I believe in God,' or not.

And if Christianity is a movement to build up the world into God's Kingdom under the Leadership of Christ, obviously all depends on our convictions about God and Christ. Take away the Father of all, and the Saviour and Leader, and our interest and enthusiasm is gone. We are but maggots in the cheese, a swarming breed of nonentities to whom nothing matters. All our finest hopes and aspirations are but the comic delusions of introspective animalculæ. Therefore our first and foremost piece of equipment is a creed, and a vital, living, intense creed. God lives, God cares, God loves, God expects. The Saviour is, redeems, uplifts, agonises, triumphs; the Spirit kindles, empowers, strengthens. With that faith we can go on; without it we sicken and are silent. But if we believe, we take a long breath, open the door, and step out into the rain and the storms and the ruins of a world, determined to build therein, in spite of all obstacles, the Kingdom of the Christ whose life and power throbs in our very hearts.

At once we meet disappointment, opposition, discouragement. But the power within never fails. In

time we shall grow old and the tools will drop from our tired hands. But part of the wall has been built. Some bricks are in their place. And other builders who come after us shall build more easily because we have done our share. And if this is so, we are perfectly content.

CHAPTER VI

SECOND EQUIPMENT—OBEDIENCE

OBEDIENCE to God, obedience to Christ. It sounds a platitude, yet nothing is more rare. Our English temperament, which hates to confess its real motives, makes matters worse.

If we don't steal it is because no gentleman does. If we keep pure it is because it's a risky thing to go wrong, and perhaps not fair on our future wife or child. Excellent reasons, but not primary reasons. Theft and fornication are wrong because they are contrary to the will and commandment of God, and we should obey Him even if we saw no further reason than that.

The error lies in the common notion that you can separate Christian morality from Christian belief. But that is not true; Christian conduct flows from Christian conviction. No doubt Christian morality influences people long after they have dropped their Christian beliefs: a certain amount of Christian morality and outlook lingers on in their minds as a kind of unconscious sentiment, just as a man who has intellectually shaken himself free from Sab-

batarian prejudices somehow cannot quite enjoy a concert or a game of golf on Sundays.

But in time these remains of Christian morality—divorced from their root—will go, and those who doubt the Christian faith will doubt Christian morals as well.

In fact, this is being largely done now. Those to whom Christianity is merely traditional will passionately defend divorce on the ground of expediency: licensing of brothels is openly advocated on grounds of health: sins of the flesh are regarded as both natural and inevitable. If this advocacy was due to practical reasons, and was accompanied by a sincere regret that the world should have so far fallen from Christian principles, one could sympathise largely with the difficulties of those who were trying to find some way out of hard problems and situations. But the point is that these advocates simply drop the Christian standpoint altogether. They are pagans in theory and therefore are naturally impatient of Christian principles, and do not seem able to understand that those who hold the Christian theory naturally differ from them over practical questions in human life.

It is difficult to foresee the future if this non-Christian standpoint is widely adopted. We may get to the great cleavage: on one side Christians by be-

lief and practice, on the other pagans in theory and practice. These honest pagans may permit divorce and perhaps polygamy; they may minimise prostitution as unsocial, but not as a sin. Their standard of morality will be determined by natural instinct and by social expediency, and we shall get back to the morality of Rome and Greece.

But Christians *must* make up their minds to be different. We have a morality of our own, not based on the shifting sands of natural instinct (which may differ to any extent among different nations, classes, or individuals), but on the revelation of God's Will through the teaching of Christ and His Church. Yes; that is the point. We Christians *must* be different from pagans. We must be content to be called narrow or prejudiced. But our narrowness is as the pruning of a tree, that it may bring forth more fruit and not luxuriate into the undisciplined foliage which only spells ultimate barrenness and sterility. We believe that this pagan toleration and license means ruin for a people or an individual. We believe discipline to be a law of all healthy and fruitful life; so that obedience to the law of Christ means the salvation of the world. Thoughtful minds are beginning to realise this under pressure of war's problems. As the diseases, which are the wages of sin, pile up their victims, when

whole battalions of men are rendered useless for war or service or parenthood, it became clear how right is Christian morality and how futile the maxims and strategies of mere natural worldly wisdom.

Would the world have health? Let it obey the laws of Christ. For therein lie health and happiness, fertility and freedom.

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But whether the world listens or continues to plunge blindly into the ruin of slavery and unhappiness, does not alter the situation for Christians. We serve the law. We may buttress our law by the considerations of expediency or refinement, but to us law is primarily law and nothing else.

Christ has given us our law, and our business is to keep it because it is His. Do not let us be ashamed of it. Too often we are ashamed of it now. We must boldly say, 'I don't do that because it is wrong; it is forbidden by Christ.' And we must ask of all Christians to face this out. Good form, 'the usual thing,' public school or Service morality will *not* carry you all the way. It will teach you some fine things—loyalty, courage, 'playing the game.' These are god-like and Christian virtues, because they come from the Lord of all good life, but they do not

complete the picture. Humility, purity, unselfishness, must come in, and above all, the positive effort to build the Kingdom of Christ among men.

That is the great blot on our public school and Service religion. It is so negative: it never commits itself to any constructive work. You can pass muster as a Christian at school or at the university or in the Service (or anywhere almost) if you keep from certain well-marked sins, such as theft and certain forms of vice. You are not required by that sort of public opinion to stir one finger or lift one foot for the reconstruction of society, or for the social and religious regeneration of a single human being. The cries of poverty, the appeal of the heathen, the weaknesses of those around you who are relapsing into sin, the wretchedness of the destitute, the inequalities of human life—all these may mean nothing at all to you, and yet you are considered a Christian, forsooth, because you attend church occasionally and do not openly deny God or Christ.

Real Christians must be marked with a mark and labelled with a label. They have a Kingdom they are building, a faith they are holding, an obedience they are rendering. Without these marks no Christianity is genuine; it only brings contempt on the name of Christian among those who pierce through our ordinary hypocrisies.

What, then, are the commandments of Christ which we must keep if we are to make a genuine approach to God? They are, of course, all contained in the saying, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart . . . and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' The commandments of Christ are the principles of love to God and neighbour worked out into the details of daily life.

Christian morality is not a set of rules. The Ten Commandments, even when Christianised, are only a guide to stupid people like us; a saint would not need them, he would love, and then could do no wrong. But while we are semi-educated in Christianity we need a code of rules, just as a concert programme contains some sort of explanation of a symphony for semi-musicians. Some day when we are Christians and musicians we shall do without programmes, for only at a certain stage are they useful. When we love God and man we shall not need them.

There is, as we all know, another form in which we find Christ's commandments—the Beatitudes. In these Christ draws a picture of the Christian character as based on love.

He who loves God and man will be humble, pure

in heart, merciful. And the Ten Commandments are just a more legal and arbitrary form of the same teaching. We are to love God and man, and therefore must not steal, lie, hate. But in whatever form Christ's Commandments are found, whether as rules for conduct or ideals for character, the same end is always in view, and the form of the presentation only differs as people are able to receive it.

So it is still to-day. You tell a boy, 'You're not to steal; you're not to bully.' To a more mature person you say, 'It's a fine thing to be honest and merciful.' To a spiritual person you need only teach 'Love God and your neighbour as God's child, and you will be right.'

So you get the three grades in the Bible—the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes, the Golden Rule. In some ways perhaps we are wrong in using the commandments so frequently in their earliest and most Jewish dress. But if they are interpreted in the light of Christ's subsequent teaching they are really the Golden Rule, though in antique dress.

Let us paraphrase the Ten Commandments, and make them into what we can reverently imagine that God would say to us to-day.

(1 and 2) Love Me above all else, and in all else; do not make an idol of anybody or anything so that it gets between Me and thee.

(3) Do not speak lightly of Me, for those who speak lightly of Me will think lightly of Me.

(4) Give Me one day in seven for special remembrance—for worship, for rejoicing in the resurrection of your Saviour, for emphasising, by common worship, the common Brotherhood of all who are Christ's.

(5) Let love rule in your home.

(6) And do not let anger or causeless hate reign in your heart against another.

(7) Conquer the passions that blot out My Presence and make you injure your neighbour and yourself.

(8) Be honest and trustworthy towards My other children.

(9) Let truth and charity be ever in your heart and on your lips.

(10) As far as is possible be contented; and never envy your neighbor what is rightly his.

But the great point is that when we have interpreted the Ten Commandments in the light of Christ's teaching, we must keep them because they are Christ's. At present the great army of more-or-less Christians hardly dreams of doing this or abstaining from that because of the commands of Christ. Faith is so weak that men only respect a standard which would be equally valid if Christ

wasn't true or didn't exist. Therefore the standard of life becomes 'bad form,' 'ungentlemanly conduct,' 'things which public school and Service people don't do'; outside that rigid standard you are free to do what you like, quite unhampered by what Christ taught or forbade. Divorce is justified; impurity is a pardonable weakness; church-going or Communion are entirely optional. The commandments of Christ, in short, unless they are backed by some agreed code like 'gentlemanly conduct,' are negligible. If anyone doubts it let him hear any discussion of moral problems in the circle round an undergraduate fireside or a Service stove.

Is there ever any reference to Christ's standard or commands? None. And if you say that it is only shyness, then I reply that it is a cowardly shyness, which leaves aside that loyalty and obedience to the law of Christ which is binding on every sincere follower of Christ.

If we are to do Christ's work in the world, we must make up our minds to live by the rule of God's commandments. We must be readier to say 'I don't do some things, and I do follow out other things, because I am a Christian.'

At present our shyness and reticence simply lead to sitting on the fence. The Christian who would follow Christ in building His Kingdom must learn

both discipline and obedience. Once we are satisfied that Christ forbids certain actions (and the state of mind that leads to such actions), the matter is finished for us. Christ has spoken, the matter is settled. Once we believe that He commands us certain principles and actions, we cease to argue. They shall be obeyed and performed. In some cases natural morality and even public opinion will support us. But whether it does or does not is a matter of indifference. If it does, all the better; if not, so much the worse for it. For we have our standard —the law of Christ. That alone will carry us through: all other standards are partial, changing, varying. And as we obey it, we must be honest enough and bold enough to confess our standard: 'I obey Christ's law because I am trying to be a Christian.'

CHAPTER VII

THIRD EQUIPMENT—KEEPING IN TOUCH BY PRAYER

WITH a living faith in God, sure of the life and love of Christ, experiencing daily the inward power of the Spirit—we go out to follow Christ and to build His Kingdom.

We are not helpless now. He has given us a faith, a zeal, a power; in His commandments we have a rule of life to guide our feet. What remains is the detail work—the pulling down of strongholds of evil customs or low ideals, and the building up of mercy, truth, righteousness, whenever opportunity serves.

But the obstacles are great. We shall not subdue the fortresses of selfishness, greed, and cruelty in a day—or in a lifetime for that matter. Again, we ourselves, the would-be builders, are only too conscious of our own weaknesses and deficiencies. Just when we should be grappling with evil we are tempted by evil, and even when not actively tempted, we are dogged by weariness or disappointment. Sometimes indeed the fire burns high and we feel ready to move mountains; sometimes the fire sinks, and it seems almost too much just to keep

clear of evil ourselves. The world is so strong, and we are so little; people are so disappointing: fanatics and cranks have such power to stop reform. We find what nerves and weariness mean. We feel inclined to drop ideals and to assume the easy mantle of the kindly cynic.

But this is our hour of decision; at any cost we must hold on till the fires rekindle and courage returns. But we shall never find adequate reserves of strength within ourselves; our sole hope is to keep in touch with our Leader, and to draw from Him comfort, vitality, and new power.

This is a point on which a Christian *must* be clear. We, as Christians, do not live by any power or excellency we find within ourselves. We may possess the machinery and apparatus within us for using any Heaven-sent power, but we do not generate it, it is generated elsewhere: the power-house of all Christian vitality is Christ. Philanthropists who disclaim any religion may indeed draw upon some natural sources, which are from God, though unrecognized as from Him. But Christians definitely draw upon reserves of strength outside themselves, and base their confidence of victory on that very fact —viz. that they are by no means bound down to any natural gifts they possess, but can draw upon the inexhaustible supply of the power and love of Christ.

There is a Greek myth of a giant slain by Perseus, who when thrown to the ground rose again with redoubled vigour because he was the son of Earth, and contact with his mother only renewed his vigour. Perseus was driven to the expedient of lifting him from the ground and crushing him, otherwise he would have been invincible. It is just so with Christians. Their strength comes explicitly from contact with Christ. To vanquish a Christian you must sever his touch with Christ. Only sin can do that. It we can keep free from sin we shall retain our contact with Christ and derive from Him an unending vigour which will lift us up after every disappointment and reinvigorate us in spite of any seeming defeat.

That is why the Christian trembles for a materialistic philanthropist. He takes risks which cannot be taken by those who want to get things done. He trusts to his natural kindliness and to the possibilities of human nature; too often he falls away in times of disillusionment, because he cannot fall back on the supernatural reserves which Christ supplies. So the Christian who knows what struggles lie ahead, who grasps all the difficulties of building the Kingdom, takes the utmost care to keep in living touch with his Leader. True that the Leader has equipped him with a living Faith and a Rule of life,

but these become mechanical without the personal daily influence of the Leader's personality.

We are not equipped once and for all and then sent to fight an independent fight. There is, and must always be, a liaison between the fighters and builders and the Leader who from the central position commands, guides, and sends up supports.

We must therefore make our first object to maintain a liaison with our Leader. To lose touch is to be lost.

Now there are two methods of keeping in touch, parallel to the various methods of communication in the field. The first is Prayer, the second Sacraments; in this chapter we must deal with Prayer.

Now prayer is a very large subject, and can be approached on many sides. In its deepest sense it is an opening of the resources of our personality to be used by God as He thinks best for His purposes. Those who regard prayer as a mere asking for benefits are estimating it at a very low value. No doubt we do ask for things—as children do—and are quite sure that God will certainly give us all necessary things, and all things which are for the furtherance of His cause or our own ultimate benefit. Simultaneously we trust God not to give us any of our requests which—if granted—would only hinder His large purposes or injure us. For instance, one can

be sure that God will say 'Yes' if we ask for the gift of unselfishness. He will say 'Yes' or 'No' (according to His plans and our own welfare) if we ask for health or survival; He will say 'No' if we ask for wealth, when such wealth would—in His foreknowledge—only make us selfish and lazy.

But in any case petition is a subordinate though real part of prayer. Primarily, it is an act of self-surrender to the purposes of God. After that it is a keeping in touch, partly so that we may be the most efficient workers and lovers possible, and partly to derive from Him that power and energy which shall enable us to build the Kingdom, or to tear down some stronghold of Satan.

Prayer is the liaison between the fighter and the Leader. Morning and evening prayers are the testing of the connections, otherwise a block may occur, and when we need our Leader's help we cannot get through to Him—contact is lost.

How different is this view of prayer from the common use and opinion of it.

Sometimes prayers are said as a sort of survival of good early training at a mother's knee; sometimes from an honest wish not to forget God altogether. Most frequently they are said for self-improvement: to acquire, either protection for oneself or one's friends, or to gain power to overcome temptation.

None of these are bad motives, yet they mostly end in self, even if an improved self. None of them aim at the highest. No thought of letting God into the soul that He may reign there, and from there do His work in building His Kingdom on His own lines.

Real prayer implies an enthusiastic discipleship, a heartfelt conviction that God is altogether King, altogether to be trusted; that He has His own plans for the uplifting of the universe to Himself, and that the best use we can make of ourselves is to put ourselves utterly and absolutely at God's service for the furtherance of His plans.

So our daily prayer really means 'use me again to-day.' It can be put in a sentence of four words, but it implies volumes. For it implies recognition of God, trust in God's supreme wisdom and goodness, surrender to Him, willingness to co-operate with Him, to make His Will our will, and His Purpose our purpose.

Of course prayer may include almost unlimited series of details. There is worship that is prayer; there is thanksgiving, petition, intercession, meditation, contemplation—all to be included in prayer.[1]

But these are really details. Prayer at bottom is

[1] Perhaps I might be allowed to refer to my 'Prayer and some of its Difficulties' (Mowbray, 7*d.*) where I have dealt with those parts of prayer *seriatim*, or to Dr. McNeile's most excellent 'Self-Training in Prayer' (Heffer, 1*s.* 6*d.*).

in-touch-ness with the Father and with Jesus our Leader in the Kingdom-building campaign. But in-touch-ness means our willing identification of our will with His Will: our purpose with His purpose: our life with His Life. It implies union of life between Jesus and ourselves (as individual members of His Body, the Church), and from that unity of life springs union of action, and this action is Kingdom-building. Prayer that ends in devotion, or in self-improvement, is a stunted growth, a fruitless tree. What prayer shall include in heaven we do not know, but on earth it includes conscious union with our Leader in the grandest of campaigns—to destroy evil and build a kingdom of purified and righteous souls.

Men of the world despair of the problem. They want a peace by compromise—as if you could ever compromise with the devil. Men and women of prayer who are in touch with Christ will have no peace without victory. Rather would they perish fighting, even if death was an eternal sleep, than compromise feebly with evil. The world may vanquish the prayerless and faint-hearted, but it will never overcome men of prayer. Secure in their contact with their invincible Leader they can put up with the hours of darkness, and can survive even the treachery of those who are called brethren but are

really traitors. To lay down arms before victory is, in this contest at least, to be a traitor and a slave.

Prayer gives us the fighting power, the serene confidence, the irrepressible vitality. No wonder that Christ bade us always to pray and never to faint, for prayer is the vital nerve of spiritual power.

Let every Christian prepare himself for conflict, for Kingdom-building; and if he wishes for victory, let him pray.

CHAPTER VIII

FOURTH EQUIPMENT—SACRAMENTAL GRACE

THE answer to prayer may be given in non-sacramental ways, for all grace is not sacramental grace, except in a wide philosophical sense. When God sees that the soul is prayerful—*i.e.* has put itself into a surrendered and expectant attitude towards Himself—He may supply the needs of the soul in many ways. He may infuse new ideas of action, fresh schemes for building the Kingdom, deeper courage, clearer vision, or more heavenly thoughts. He may allow stronger temptations to brace and strengthen the soul. He may open the mind which studies the Scriptures to meanings and depths not hitherto apprehended. In a general sense God has promised His blessing to all who seek to do His Will, but there are certain ordinances instituted by Christ Himself which carry with them a definite promise of grace to those who use them convertedly.

The Church has called them 'sacraments' (from the Latin *sacramentum*, an oath or pledge), and they are defined as 'signs,' *i.e.* that the inward benefit or blessing is conveyed to the receiver through the use of something outward and visible. As affection is conveyed through a kiss, or displeasure by a frown

or blow, so through the use of water in the name of Christ, or of bread consecrated in His name and by His power, definite grace is given to the faithful soul.

There have always been controversy and difficulty on the subject of sacraments, largely because of the rightful jealousy of devout men lest Christians should treat the sacraments as magic, and so depend upon the outward reception of the sacrament to the neglect of that necessary conversion of heart and life which alone enables the sacrament to be of any value to the soul. It is a mistake to think that the differences of Christian men on this subject are due to mere perversity or theological animus; it is because men are jealous for the highest interpretation and use of the sacraments that they are so insistent on emphasis—one side on the value of the gift given, the other on the necessity of a right preparation of heart if the gift is to be truly received and profitably used. We may be able to see that both these sides need equal emphasis, but the difficulty with which human minds are able to grasp both sides of a question makes it almost inevitable that each side should emphasise one aspect of truth, almost as if it was the only one, whereas a true view will include both. Let me say therefore at once, that the view of the sacraments which will follow here includes (1) a

real gift of God given in the sacrament; (2) the need of a real honest conversion of the will to God if the gift is to be able to take root and produce its proper harvest in the soul.

. . . . . .

First let us examine why it is that real churchmen have always placed such a high value on the sacraments.

The answer is simple. They were instituted by Christ Himself, and were, moreover, instituted at such momentous occasions in His Life as to lend them a peculiar and outstanding importance of their own. It was at the moment of our Lord's departure from this world that He gave His last command: 'Go ye and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'

It was as His last public act before He died on the cross that He instituted the Holy Communion. 'This is My Body . . . do this in remembrance of Me.' In view of the institution of these sacraments by Christ, and the momentous occasion of their institution, is it not quite amazing that, *e.g.*, so few Christians use Communion: and is it to be wondered at if real churchmen give them a unique position and importance in their conception of Christ's religion?

Let us see first where most church people would agree in this matter.

First, it would be agreed that our Lord came into a sinful and misguided world to build a new Kingdom of redeemed people who were to own Him as their Head, and their fellow-members as their brethren in Him.

It would be agreed that when this new Kingdom began its life and work (Acts ii. 41) the conditions of entry were: (1) Faith in Christ as God, (2) repentance from sin, (3) baptism as the ceremony of incorporation into the body of believers or the Kingdom of Christ.

So far, then, we all hold this great truth in common. Baptism is a sign—instituted by Jesus—whereby repentant men and women enter into the fellowship of Christ's religion: we give our allegiance publicly to Christ and acknowledge our baptized fellows as—with us—servants of Christ and members of His Church.

And, again, in regard to Holy Communion we can find a large measure of agreement. Communion means a further fellowship for Christians. Communion is a meal wherein we have spiritual contact with Christ. He comes to strengthen and refresh our souls; but it is, further, a meal shared in common with other Christians. They who eat the same Bread

and drink the same Cup are brethren in Christ: united both to Him and to each other. Communion is a *sacramentum*, or renewed oath of fraternity, among those who are pledged to the forwarding of Christ's purposes, and to the building of Christ's Kingdom.

This latter point has been very culpably obscured by nearly all Christians. They have pressed the point of union with Christ, but have forgotten the point of union with each other. Every Communion ought to emphasise this element of comradeship; it should be—as it were—the last meal together of those who were about to go out to some conflict in which there might be wounds or death for any or all.

Thus far we are largely united. We believe in baptism as incorporation into the Brotherhood of Jesus; we believe in Communion as a real act of spiritual union with Christ and with our fellow-Christians. Thank God we are one in believing so much; it is quite sufficient to make us brethren, and to prevent us carping at those who, though differing in emphasis and interpretation from each other, are yet members of the same Church and servants of the same Lord.

Yet those of us who honour the name of Catholic, and believe that the spirit of God inspired the Scrip-

tures and guides the Church, must be pardoned if we think that what we hold in common is a minimum of sacramental belief. It is enough to cement the brethren together into one fellowship: yet it seems to come short not only of Scripture, but also of the Prayer Book doctrine to which we have given our assent.

I do not think it is—with the majority of us English Churchmen—a matter of true or false, or right and wrong. It is a matter of emphasis. *We* believe that incorporation into the Church carries with it a new birth into the Christian order, that is to say, 'into Christ.' We have become 'new creatures in Christ,' and are therefore re-born or regenerate; and we think that in Communion the spiritual food we receive is the glorified Manhood of Christ—'Verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper.'

Our reasons for this emphasis are not, we think, fanciful; they are based on Scripture and the teaching of the Church.

The whole of St. John's teaching in chapter vi. of his Gospel might indeed have been interpreted purely mystically had it not been for the subsequent institution of the rite of Holy Communion. But with that rite in view it became impossible to deny that Christ offers to His faithful followers a real par-

taking of His Body and Blood—*i.e.* His glorified Manhood, spiritual indeed, but absolutely real. 'He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood dwelleth in Me and I in him.' This language is meaningless unless Flesh and Blood refer to His Incarnate life as Man. Holy Communion, then, is an imparting to us of the actual Incarnate glorified Life of Christ, so that we are one with Him not merely mystically, but sacramentally. So also with the words of institution: 'This (is) My Body.' Whether our Lord said the word 'is' (ἐστιν) in some equivalent Aramaic form is beside the mark; at any rate, He called the Bread 'My Body.' It must mean, if it means anything, that His Incarnate Life is transmitted to us when we receive it. But we may hope that at bottom it is only a matter of emphasis. Catholics and Evangelicals alike believe in a Presence; a proper preparation of heart; a fellowship with Christ and each other. Catholics lay more stress on the first of the three than the Evangelicals seem to do. I believe the solution lies in practice. As we communicate side by side and try to realise our fellowship with Christ and each other, I do not doubt that Christ will make real to us all in His own good time 'His Presence with His own.'

And similarly with baptism. 'As many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ,' says

the Scripture. And the Catechism amplifies this: 'Baptism, wherein I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven.' So also the Baptismal Office in the Prayer Book: 'Seeing now . . . that this child is regenerate.' Evangelicals are so afraid of magic. Spurgeon put the matter succinctly—and unfairly: 'What! must I be converted and live a new life? . . . there is no need; I am baptized.'[1] Catholics, however, do not believe in magic either. That the child is regenerate they affirm; that it receives all blessings fitted to its childish estate they insist; but the matter does not end here. Unless the child as it becomes responsible for its actions learns to be a practical Christian with a converted will and heart, baptism ceases to be a blessing and becomes only a reproach and a condemnation.

There are signs that Evangelicals will accept baptism as a real 'clothing of the soul with Christ'; missionaries of their own party have testified with surprise to the difference between baptized and pagan children at very early stages. If we can make it clear that we too believe in conversion, and that infant baptism, though a tender and loving custom which—at a risk—puts even unconscious infants

[1] I have not the reference, but the sense is absolutely true to the original. He puts the sentence in the mouth of an Anglican.

into the life of Christ and the Church, yet demands a subsequent conversion of the will and the life if it is to be a saving institution,—then we may find our agreement coming closer as we try to build Christ's Kingdom side by side.

But this at least we can learn in common. That the sacraments are the final part of our equipment for building the Kingdom, for they are the covenanted means whereby Christ comes to be in us and with us. After all, it was He who instituted them. It was He who said 'Go . . . and baptize'; 'Do this in remembrance of Me'; 'Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted.'

The sacraments are not charms to preserve us from the Evil One; they are modes devised by Christ, whereby He can give us His Presence as we make our pilgrimage through the difficult roads of life, and as we try to build His Kingdom faithfully.

All our defence of the sacraments and our belief in them only comes from our conviction of the utter necessity for us of Christ's companionship and presence, and from the belief that though there are many general methods of seeking His Presence and His Spirit, yet in the sacraments we have very special means of grace instituted by Himself and jealously handed down by His Spirit-bearing Church.

But to a fighting Christian the chief value of the sacraments lies here; that as we strive to build Christ's Kingdom of righteousness and love, we need above all things His Presence. That we seek for in prayer and inspiration, but in the sacraments we find nothing less than His own methods of granting His Presence, so that with Him beside us and within us, we can build His Kingdom effectually. This is a point not always sufficiently expressed. Christians are invited to Communion that their own personal holiness may be developed. But this can easily become a kind of religious selfishness; our business is not merely to be holy, but to glorify God by building Christ's Kingdom on earth. Too often we seem to teach 'Come and be holy,' whereas we should say, 'Become holy in order to help.' If we could grasp that a great work is to be done, a great campaign to be fought, a Kingdom to be built, then we should feel the need of Christ's Presence and aid, so that we might be strong enough to struggle and to work. It is so even with individual cases. 'Be holy in order to help your friend Dick' is much more appealing to a boy than the simple 'Be holy.'[1]

And if our orders are to build a Kingdom, we shall visualise sacraments from that point of view. We shall come to Communion as tired fighters who

[1] *Cf.* 'Letters of H. H. Jeafferson' (Longmans, 4*s.* 6*d.*).

need the comfort and the help of Christ to revive us, and send us back to the day's campaign with fresh vigour and courage. There we shall receive Him into our souls, and mutely renew our vow of comradeship to the other fighters, who are also receiving the same Lord to strengthen them for the common task. No doubt this postulates that communicants must grasp that they are builders and fighters, and not merely pietists. But they ought to grasp it; for as the first Communion was given to Apostles who had been explicitly trained to be builders of the Kingdom of God, so it is now. We shall never understand and use the Sacraments healthily and unselfishly until we have learnt the noble warrior-spirit of soldiers of Christ. It is only when we long to be really effective that we shall come to Christ for effectiveness, or when we are weary with the good fight that we shall come to Him for renewed vigour.

Sacramentum to the ancient Romans was a military oath; so should it be for the Christian. To pacifists and neutrals in the great warfare between good and evil sacraments will mean little except mysticism or emotionalism; to those who know that Christianity means the establishment and maintenance of a militant kingdom of righteousness, sacraments will mean something fine and ennobling.

Baptism enrols the recruit into the fighting army and touches him with the life of the Leader; Confirmation endows him with the soldier virtues; Communion gives him his Leader's conscious Presence; Absolution heals his wounds and puts him back into the fighting-line again.

Surely it is time that we ceased to regard Communion as the preserve of the emotionally pious, or of the man or woman who seeks to promote mere personal holiness. Holiness-become-effective is what we want, and if men could only grasp the splendour and arduousness of the great adventure which Christians are challenged to make under Christ's Leadership, our altars would again be thronged by valiant souls who sought the presence and strength of Christ to nerve their arm and steel their courage for effective service in the noblest of all campaigns.

CHAPTER IX

THE MISSING BUILDERS

THE ideal of building Christ's Kingdom of righteousness, when once it has dawned upon a man's consciousness, can never be forgotten.

> 'Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
> When a new planet swims into his ken;
> Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
> He stared at the Pacific.'

The thought is so terrific and splendid that it dwarfs into insignificance all the petty little selfishnesses which constitute so much of normal life.

To give oneself for a cause: to follow such a Leader: to do something eternally worth doing: to take part in a divine warfare against evil: to labour at the erection of a kingdom of truth and beauty, holiness and love, seems so admittedly fine and noble that one wonders why there is anybody who can't see it, and why everybody is not a soldier and a builder in the cause.

Of course we find parallels in music and art. How can people prefer the music of the 'Girl on the Film' to Beethoven, or the daubs of the suburban picture-

shops to Turner? Yet they do. One wonders sometimes whether Christianity is too noble and fine for the earth-bound appreciation of the man in the street ever to comprehend. I suppose we have to remember at least three things. First, man is a progressive being, and in his early stages—whether ethnical or individual—is very animal. Most children are naturally rather greedy and selfish, and need education to lift them above these unamiable traits. The fineness of unselfishness and self-sacrifice need time for development and appreciation. We must be patient with undeveloped people and let life educate them. Secondly, we must learn that evil is very real and does blind people to truth and light. There are some who 'love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil.' There is (as every spiritual person knows) a very solid and terrible power of darkness which obscures and hampers and thwarts all efforts to reach the light. Perversity, self-will, obstinacy in evil, persecution of goodness by sneer or force—all these are very real and keep men and women from thinking or reflecting, and so quench the promptings of natural religion which otherwise might guide them to higher truth.

We are not fighting in a neutral country. The lands on which we hope to erect Christ's Kingdom

are at present in occupation by a determined and bitter enemy—those powers of darkness and principles of evil which emerge so quickly when any effort after goodness is made, though they keep quiet enough in an atmosphere of false peace and security. In a word, you never know the power and presence of evil till you challenge it by trying to do good: then evil becomes almost palpable. So we must not be too surprised if men cannot see the light: there are 'principalities and powers' whose interest it is to keep them blind, and whose principal weapon is to persuade men that they themselves do not exist. All spiritual men know the existence of powers of evil; the more spiritual you are the clearer you feel them. St. Paul and the Apostles knew all about them, and Our Lord most of all. But the average man denies that they exist, and by so doing rivets their chains more firmly upon himself.

And thirdly, we must acknowledge with open penitence that the teachers of the Church—mostly the clergy—have presented Christianity to men in such a poor and unromantic way that it has failed to enlist their zeal and enthusiasm. Christianity has been misrepresented as a kind of making up (what children call 'sucking up') to God in order to save your soul from hell. Or it was an effort to develop and increase your own goodness, and so to secure

your salvation. Or it was a call to leave the world to stew in its own juice while you retired into some quiet corner to bask in the sweet joys of the love and service of God. But all this is simply selfish. It is a religious selfishness, but no better on that account. Holiness which stops at self is of no worth: God does not want holy people who fawn upon Him while He pets them. He wants holy people to serve Him by building His Kingdom and by uplifting a world to the end and vocation for which He has destined it. He wants lovers and workers, not paralytic pietists. Of course it is a thousand times right that we should love Him Who is infinitely lovable, but love is not mere absorption in devotion; the lover must leave his Object to go and labour among the human hearts and lives for whom the Saviour died. And it is not even true to say that we will work for men for the love of God only. That is one motive and the highest, yet unless we come to love men for their own sake too—for their pathos, their helplessness, their sorrows and failures, their efforts and good qualities, their possession of a spark of the divine—we shall only treat them as 'cases' instead of as individualities with something to love in each.

What we have not taught sufficiently is that because God loves man, and because man is meant to be immortal and holy, and because we love both God

and man, therefore we must strip ourselves for the effort to raise man—for God's sake and his own—to the nobility and sublimity to which God has predestined him.

And the effort is so noble and so worth while that it doesn't matter in the least what happens to us.

'Who dies, if England lives?'

Self-sacrifice—which must be our portion if we are to forget ourselves in the ardour of the struggle—is no sacrifice really. Who wants to think of self? What hero is thinking of the V.C. as he carries in his friend out of No Man's Land? He does it because it's got to be done; he doesn't count: the thing worth doing has gripped him.

Let us then have the one object. Man is to be raised to God: it has got to be done. In a thousand ways we must raise humanity. We must come to God ourselves first so as to have the power to do the job. Hence prayer and sacrament and holiness as equipment for the task. Then in direct or remote ways we must get to grips. I may have to do it by writing books or preaching sermons, or persuading the unconverted. You may do it by being a good landlord or an honest grocer. Another may do it by helping his next-door neighbour when his wife is ill. All that uplifts, all that makes for goodness,

all that comes under the head of 'truth and honour, freedom and courtesy,' is part of the campaign, a portion of the building. We have narrowed the campaign into personal holiness or religious observances, and thereby have lost the key to the innate nobilities of men's souls. And the result? The result is that not having grasped the objects to be achieved, men have seen no use for the equipment; not having a vision of a world to be saved, they cease to seek God's grace, by Whose aid they can alone save it.

Hence you get the puzzle of 'the men at the front.' Are they irreligious? Surely not, if they can do fine and noble things. For there is nothing fine except from God. If religion is 'the Life of God in the soul of man,' then there is a good deal of religion at the front; it shows itself in unselfishness, cheerfulness, courage, self-sacrifice. All this is religion, and a fine religion too. But they have two faults. First, their religion is too narrow. Bravery in action, unselfishness in billets, will not solve the whole problem. Unselfishness and self-sacrifice must be extended to cover the abolition of prostitution and the wiping out of slums, as well as the attainment of purity of heart, the service of man, and the worship and love of God.

Their religion isn't big enough yet; they have

hedged it with too narrow limits. And they do not connect their religion with their real leader, Christ. Hence their narrowness. They are bounded by natural religion. If they could only see the whole of the campaign: if they could realise how much wider than the fight against Germans is the whole area of the gigantic struggle of good against evil, then they might see their need of a Divine Leader, and might come to Him for strength and sustenance for the bigger campaign.

I would say of these 'missing builders' that, in company with many sailors and many civilians, 'they build in part and they fight in part.' They are not without God or religion, for to a real point they do His work and act in His Spirit. But they have more to learn. They must open their eyes to the issue of the wider campaign against all evil everywhere, and must build up all good everywhere—in themselves and in humanity. They need a Leader greater than any earthly and fallible commander. They need His help; they need to keep their communications open with Him, so that they may be irresistible.

When our soldiers return they will not find that all fighting is over. They will find a nation which has trembled very near to ruin—and mostly by its own decay of vision and fine living—and there will

be the task of building our Empire afresh on the only true lines of mutual help and fidelity, mutual honour and love. They will find a Church, weak through its own feebleness and through their defection, yet still the Brotherhood of Christ's workers, and Christ's organ of prophetic utterance and spiritual assistance. Will they back the Church and so make it God's own great power to convert the nation to God and goodness, or will they return just for an almighty spree and then revert to the old, divided, ignorant, materialistic England? Ah! you missing builders, how we need you, and how England needs you! But the fault is not all on one side. We clergy are to blame because we have not presented Christianity to you as a noble and romantic adventure. You 'missing builders' are to blame because you have thought narrowly and seen no large vision of a god-like nation leading a brotherly and fine life. Let us all repent of our share of the disaster. We will try to be ready for you when you return, and you must extend your view of the campaign which lies before every true man, and will come back—not to be missing builders any more, but to take your destined part in co-operating with Christ in building the New Jerusalem in 'England's green and pleasant land.'

CHAPTER X

THE REWARD OF THE BUILDERS

ALL good work is done with joy. And this is true of the Christian's labour: 'Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.'

But it must not be thought that the joy is the object of work: it is the result—necessary and happy, but a concomitant, not the object. The reward of work done is a worthy object attained, or something noble and beautiful created; no artist does good work if he is thinking of pay or fame. A writer writes because he has something true to say; an artist paints because he has a vision which he attempts to reproduce; pot-boiling or reputation-seeking is never art, nor does it bring joy.

To the Christian, God is the infinitely good, the infinitely beautiful, the eternal value, and man is not only capable of assimilating goodness and beauty, but is destined for union both with the divine qualities and with the Divine Person.

The Christian's object and work, therefore, is to labour with God for this union of man with God—an object which not only honours God but lifts man to his proper destiny and blessedness.

Hence the zeal of the Christian reformer. Any-

thing that hinders the union of God and man is anathema, for it is a crime against man's truest happiness and satisfaction.

Man is created to know, love, and serve God, and enjoy Him for ever. All that hinders this consummation is a curse and a tragedy whatever form it takes—whether it is slums or ugly surroundings, whether it is crippling poverty or exhausting hours of manual toil, or ignorance, or lust, or selfishness, or dreary materialism that confines man to animality, or the want of a true idea of God and of religion —all of these are impediments to the joyful union of God and man, and are therefore hateful to the Christian builder. All such impediments are *sin*; they arise from preventable causes and degrade the souls of men. Christ died that He might redeem mankind from sin, and the Christian co-operates with Christ in destroying evil and uplifting human lives to God. Thus there is a work that must be done, and this is the Christian's object and motive. If the doing of it would mean hell for himself, he would still do it; for it is right, it must be done. But, as a matter of fact, the effort to uplift humanity to God means heaven and not hell for the worker. I do not only mean an ultimate heaven, where sin is absent and goodness is triumphant. I mean a present heavenliness which results automatically from working

hard at worthy objects. There is no joy in the world like the joy of creation, whether you be an artist producing a masterpiece or an ordinary person doing some small job thoroughly and honestly.

So the Christian who utterly gives himself to the task of building Christ's Kingdom of righteous and holy people may be worried and vexed by the difficulties, internal and external, which hamper all honest souls who are doing good work, yet he will carry heaven in his own heart.

It is quite wrong to think that Christians are miserable people. No worker is ever really miserable. If you find miserable persons who call themselves Christians, be sure that they are not proper Christians at all. Either they do not love God or man, or else are idlers who moan and lament because they are idling and talking when they should be at work or prayer. A proper Christian has many quiet joys of the soul. He is right with God to start with. His soul is in harmony with the higher Powers. Nothing temporal or earthly can really touch him—except sin. If his wife or child die, he will meet them again: if his health goes, he can still pray for mankind: if poverty reaches him, one can learn to be content with little. In a word, he is *happy*; for happiness comes from bearing about with you in your heart the secret sources of happiness; pleasures

lie outside you, but happiness lies within. Pleasures must be sought for, and it is so easy to weary of them: happiness is a magic talisman which transmutes all into gold, so that its possessor gets more genuine delight from the moon's reflection in a puddle, or from the painted wings of a butterfly, than did Caligula from all the costly feasts and wild extravagancies of the whole of his selfish life.

And this harmony of the soul with God makes possible all the wonderful low-toned and quiet joys of life. The fun and easiness of friendship, the appreciation of beauty in its many forms—literary, artistic, natural; the appreciation of wit in its subtle ironies and contrasts, the power of discernment of good in so much of life.

Again I repeat that these are not the real object of life, which is the one great, all-worthy task of the uplifting of all life to God, but God has so arranged things that the by-products of a life of unselfishness produce more true joy than all the violent pleasures of the selfish put together.

Therefore let the world observe, that Christians do not seek pleasure or joy as a primary object. That object is a work to be done for God irrespective of consequences or by-products. Yet as a matter of fact the doing of true work brings a satisfaction undreamt of by the restless seekers who make pleas-

ure their primary object. If anyone doubts it, let him read Mr. McKenna's novel 'Sonia' and judge whether London society of 1913 was happy. You get the rush for pleasure, the vulgar craze for a place in society, the ambitions of personal aggrandisement. But happiness! There is more happiness in a line of Thomas à Kempis than in all the picture which Mr. McKenna has painted so mercilessly and so graphically.

But the world will not understand: it does not appreciate low tones. It wants its colours flung on the canvas gaudily. But it is perhaps worth telling the world that if ever it gets sick of pleasure, there is somewhere where happiness is to be found. It is found by anyone who in union with Christ is trying, however feebly, to lift up the world to its proper destiny within the heart and life of God.

CHAPTER XI

GOD'S OBJECT IN BUILDING A KINGDOM

WHY did God ever seek to build a Kingdom? For it involves so much toil and trouble for Him and for us.

There is no problem for animals: no sin, no failure, no tragedy. Life is good to them while it lasts, and death is unanticipated. But for man God Himself is in travail and is crucified; while man must build his share of the Kingdom with toil and pain, and often with failure. 'What is man that Thou art mindful of him, and the Son of Man that Thou visitest him?'

The only answer is that God must think it worth while; the ultimate happiness of the Kingdom is worth the pain of God and the sorrows of the builders. God must have faced the situation eternally, and willed that the end justified all the risks that must be taken. Creation was an adventure for God, as religion is an adventure for man; but God Who foresaw the whole travail and glory of humanity in one eternal glimpse, knew that the good which should be attained outweighed the evil. For we must be very positive that God would not have cre-

ated a universe or humanity unless He had something good to bestow or impart.

God might create beings for mere torture, but He would then be a devil, not the Father of Christ and the Father of men. Our conscience guarantees to us that in spite of all puzzles God is good and means good to all His children.

We are forced then to believe, first, that God knows that good will finally so far outweigh evil that creation will be justified; and, secondly, that He offers to us—His sensitive creation—such good things as are both possible of attainment and of vital value. What these things may be, no doubt passes our understanding, but because we know little it does not follow that what we do know is untrustworthy. We may boldly say that man's final destiny, *i.e.* heaven, is the eternal enjoyment (in company with the whole body of the Blessed) of the vision and life of truth, beauty, goodness, and love. But since truth, beauty, goodness, and love are the character of God, then our life and vision will be in God, and not in any way apart from Him.

There is an essential union possible between all blessed spirits and God. That union means that we shall share the Life of God. As He creates we shall create, as He loves we shall love, as He is good we shall be holy, as He is the source of all beauty we

shall be inside the secret and life of beauty, as He is truth we shall know and do truth.

Is this worth all our toil and effort to attain, both for ourselves and (by building) for the greatest number possible? It depends, I suppose, on our outlook on life. If you have a vulgar outlook, which finds complete satisfaction in a materialistic heaven of wine and 'houris,' or in a perpetual sloth and self-indulgence, no doubt the Christian heaven seems dull or insipid. Hence you get the easy sneers at St. John's imagery, and the jests about sitting on a damp cloud with a harp when you have no ear for music. But this childish literalness belongs to childish minds. Heaven as the Christian anticipates it is the haven of noble souls whose thirst for perfection will find its proper satisfaction. Have you a passion for truth? Amid all the lies and intrigue and deceptions of the world, do you long for simple honesty and straight dealing? You will find it there. Have you a thirst for true scientific knowledge, the desire to know things as they really are, their nature and source and explanation? You will be satisfied there. Do you want to love, not with the little low-powered engine of an average human heart, but with the heart of a God—and to love all that is lovable: persons and beauty, and all that is worth our worship in the sum of all things? You will love there as God loves. Do

you long to be good—really pure and unselfish, really noble and valiant? You will attain there through full union with the God Who—by putting into you a spark of His own life—made you long for that fullness of which you had already a tiny foretaste.

Such must be heaven, although our glimpse be of the smallest; and all noble minds and hearts must inevitably seek it, and those who seek shall find it. And God thought it worth while, for the sake of such as shall attain, to lay down conditions which, though hard, are yet to His Mind deserving of the struggle. The Kingdom is worth the fighting, the joy is worth the pain. Therefore God created, and Christ suffered, and Christians must strive and must build, because God has provided an object so worthy and joyful that from heaven—if we attain—we shall look back with wonder that, in face of the reward, we ever ventured to think the price too high.

CHAPTER XII

THE KINGDOM AND THE PRESENT WAR

IS the present great war against Germany a setback to the Kingdom? It is, and yet it is not. Absolutely, all war between human beings is a terrible evil, which enthrones hatred instead of love, but it may be a comparative blessing if it is the only alternative to a state of peace which is self-indulgent and complacent in evil.

Some wars are better than some sorts of peace, in fact. And if we are to judge whether there is more of good than evil in this war, we should need to survey an almost unlimited field of rival facts.

But, first, we must settle what is the object for which God created us. As regards the next world He created us for heaven, but for this world He made us that we might discover the secret of right living.

Some people talk as if God's main object for humanity was to keep alive for the longest time the largest number of self-indulgent men and women.

To put an extreme case in an unfair way, I think that all bicyclists and foot-passengers are roused to a sense of irritability when a motor swings round the corner amid a flurry of dust, carrying four or five

large, fat, prosperous-looking middle-aged men, each smoking a large cigar and conveying the impression to you that you have no right to live. They may be excellent citizens in reality, enjoying a day's holiday after much strenuous public work, and rightly regaling themselves with the cigar for which they have put aside a few hard-earned pennies. But for argument's sake I assume the worst, that many of them are rather selfish, rather self-indulgent, rather self-absorbed people. Now, what is God's object for them (and us too)? Is it to prolong that sort of life until senility, or would it be better if at a turn in the road they saw a child drowning in the river and all plunged in and perished?

There is much to be said for keeping them alive. Probably they are decent fathers and kind husbands. But I am not going to say that God is unjust or unfair to them if they were brought home silent in a death which was a credit to them and an example to humanity. For they had learnt the secret of life—and perhaps it was doubtful before—that man is meant for unselfishness, not for selfishness; for self-sacrifice, and not for self-indulgence.

So when I read of young lives ending in death on the battlefield, I lament for the parents and the wives, I think sadly of what they might have done in a more perfect world where nations might be good

without the awful medicine of war, but I am not going to say that all is loss.

I shall ask whether they would have learnt self-sacrifice had this struggle not taken place, and I shall ask whether their self-sacrifice was made in honest patriotism and noble self-forgetfulness; for if so, all is yet well.

Granted that all war and hatred and evil is against the primary Will of God. It is and must be. But it is more than arguable that if the world is sunk in luxury and selfishness, war is not only inevitable, but is better than a peace which keeps men alive in body but drowns them in their soul. I do not really think it much matters how long we live; I think it matters extremely whether, before we die, we have learnt the secret of right living.

Therefore I do not think that we can say that the war is necessarily all loss. It is a loss inasmuch as if the world had been noble this war would never have been. I think it loss because the source of this war is evil, patently evil. But granted the condition of the world in 1914, brought about and established by man's sin and moral poverty, I am not going to deny that in 1917 there may be more for God to rejoice over in the world than there was three years ago. And I think we might well adopt the attitude of the early Christians towards death. When a good

man died—and who have died better than our boys? —they held that he was not really dead, but only removed to another place. There he was nearer God, his work more heavenly, his life more happy. I do not underrate the naturalness of grief or the deep human sorrow of loss: we should be less than human did we not feel them. But after all we must think, and remain true to our principles. Life here is a probation, a school of character, an apprenticeship to eternity. All of us must pass out of it some day. Shall we say that those who are gone from it in their fresh youth, with ideals fulfilled, with God's secret of life learnt, have lost much, or indeed anything?

They do not say so themselves. Who of us has not received letters from some who now rest in God, who declared themselves ready to pay the price serenely and securely?

Better for us to be frankly Christian and say boldly that while we pray for them we do not fear for them. They have died in the noblest of the causes ever given to England to uphold. It is true that the battlefield is a place of pain and evil sights; so was the pass of Thermopylæ when Leonidas and his men died that Greece might live; so was Calvary when Christ was crucified.

But history has its judgment upon both those

battlefields. Therefore as things are, as the world was before the war, we cannot say that the struggle was unnecessary, nor that the dead have died in vain. If tyranny raises its head, true men must die for freedom. Bitter though the losses are, there are brave souls who have lost all and yet know that they have lost nothing. Brutal, aggressive, self-seeking wars are an offence to God and a loss to man; lives lost in the defence of truth and freedom may be, and are, an honour to God and the salvation of a world.

CHAPTER XIII

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

IF you are proper Christians who are ready to forget yourselves and your own interests in the wider enthusiasm for the building of Christ's Kingdom of righteousness upon earth, there are certain points and objects which you should consider very carefully.

First you must cut yourselves free from the maxims and standards of this world. You belong to a Kingdom not of this world, and though your feet are in the earth, your head and shoulders—so to speak—are with Christ in heaven. 'Our conversation is in heaven.'

Your rewards will not be earthly. You are promised neither wealth nor fame, nor good health nor prosperity. You will be given daily bread and a sufficiency of shelter and clothes, but otherwise just that degree of comfort and that set of circumstances which God chooses. You follow a working-man Saviour who was crucified, and Apostles who endured persecution and death; why should you and I fare better? Your reward will be good work done and an inward peace and joy, which are unknown to the restless unstable world, yet are quite sufficient

reward to you. The world simply doesn't guess the happiness and strong inward peace which not only satisfies but delights the Christian. It is as a strong perpetual song which makes music in the soul. You must be prepared to sacrifice a good deal of natural comfort for your Church-militant requirements. You have to rise early enough for prayer or Communion; you must be willing to risk unpopularity—if necessary—by standing fast to your Christian principles.[1] Sometimes you will have to stand alone, and separateness, however necessary, is seldom agreeable to a normally constituted and naturally gregarious human being.

Then you *must* find time for prayer, and you *must* be regular in your Communions, otherwise your touch with Christ, your Leader, will be intermittent and cold, and you will never have the reserves of strength and keenness which make effective work possible. But the reward of all this care and trouble is a deep harmony and communion with Christ, and a real fraternal *camaraderie* with your fellow-fighters, and this not only gives you joy, but also an effective power of work and warfare.

You will find that as a Christian you have your own sorrows and joys, which are quite different

[1] I owe a debt of gratitude to Miss Annie Crawley for a most useful letter on the subject of this chapter.

from the world's, but are very real. You must expect occasional depressions, which however can be effectually conquered by plunging deeper into work.

And then as to work itself. You must start at home and work outwards. Is your home happy? If not, try and make it so. An interest in foreign missions is no excuse for neglecting your mother or for breaking up the life of home, unless indeed you have a vocation for mission work, which involves the sacrifice of the lesser for the greater good. But St. John's apostleship involved no neglect of Christ's Mother, nor should your discipleship hurt your home life.

Then, to go wider, there is your sphere of work. In the office or the shop there may be evil customs which you must try to break, or unstable comrades whom you will quietly strengthen, perhaps by word or deed, certainly by the fact that you are yourself trying to live in touch with Christ.

Then there is the church to which you attach yourself, where there is useful and unpretentious service you can give. Or there are the social reforms which come into Christianity as coterminous with the work which Christ did in healing the sick. You should enter into municipal life if you can and, at least by your vote, endeavour to place honest men and women in the position where they can abolish slums, relieve

poverty, and generally elevate the life of the people —bringing health and life and sweetness into the everyday life of men.

And if you have a parliamentary vote you will not give it to the carpet-bagger, who only wants to climb to fame on your shoulders, but will support—if possible—some honest local man or well-known character, who is a statesman, not a politician, and stands for the uplifting of the nation and the establishment of fair, honest, and kindly dealing, both nationally and internationally.

And beyond this again is the salvation of a world through the holy activities of the world-saving Brotherhood, the Catholic Church of Christ. That Brotherhood is divided, and in its parts, sometimes misguided, sometimes feeble; to unite, strengthen, sanctify it, is a matter for your most earnest prayers and your most unremitting endeavours.

If you have been placed by God in the part of the Brotherhood which is the Church of England, you have at hand an immense field which demands your interest, your prayers, and all your reforming zeal.

In many ways we have lost the excellencies which both Catholicism and Evangelicalism contain. The notes of authority, holiness, sacramentarianism, discipline, which mark a real Catholicism, are often weak or absent; while the immediacy of contact

with God by faith and prayer, for which Evangelicalism stands, is lost in a respectability and starchy orthodoxy which is neither Catholic nor Evangelical nor soul-saving.

To restore the loving surrender of men to the claims of God: to enlist them in the great warfare for righteousness and light: to make firm and steadfast the life and authority of the Brotherhood, is a task which calls for your utmost efforts. And there are a multitude of problems, peculiar to the Church of England, which need solution. Diocesan life needs a revolution in the establishment of the cathedral as the centre of the bishop's influence and the home of his staff, for at present the Church is too much organised for peace and not for war. The staff of a cathedral should be a war-staff of active men, each superintending a department of diocesan work, and closely in touch with the bishop. Instead of that, canonries are often resting-places for the aged, or prizes for the ambitious.

Then there is the problem of the provision and training of the clergy, which at present is so unsystematised and amateur. Beyond any question each diocese should have its own clergy school, which it would fill not only by volunteers from public schools and universities, but by men of honest report—obviously fitted for the priesthood—who

would be recommended (and probably maintained) by parishes within the diocese. Our present system admits men of very superficial character and perhaps doubtful past who possess a knowledge of Greek and a university training, while it keeps out a very Apollos or Peter because a vocation was discovered late, or because a humble home did not allow of a classical education.

The missionary work of the Church also is amateur beyond belief. We do through societies, dependent on casual subscriptions, a work of the most momentous character which should be simply the first and best organised business of the Church as a whole.

As for purity work, educational work, home mission work, we leave them in the hands of casual societies and obscure individuals. To some of us clergy the names of diocesan inspectors of religious education may be known, but to how many of the laity? These great branches of work which should each be under the rule of a canon at the cathedral, who should possess real weight and authority in his department, are left—if not in neglect—at least in diocesan obscurity.

And you will find plenty to do in connection with your parish church. For, after all, a great deal of the sloth and futility of the clergy is only possible because the laity demand so little.

If there is no daily or weekly Eucharist in your parish; no hearty endeavour to get into touch with the indifferent by outdoor preaching or house-to-house visiting; no heartiness in ill-attended services: how often is it due to the fact that the vicar—once a fighter—is now somnolent, because he has had bitter experience of the apathy of his laity?

If you and two friends asked for a Saint's Day Eucharist: if you asked for a daily even-song; if you offered to visit in the evenings or to assist at an outdoor preachment, do you not suppose that it would galvanise many a torpid priest?

But, in truth, we are all to blame. We have taught personal piety as a substitute for the Christian warfare of the Church militant. We have encouraged people to come to church to *get* something—preaching or singing or self-improvement—instead of to *give* something of worship and praise to God. We have taught communion as only a beautiful union with Christ, instead of a means whereby we receive into our hearts the fire of energy of His Life to be translated into a living zeal for the building of His Kingdom and the salvation of His children.

We have—in a word—taught and believed Christ's religion to be spiritual self-improvement instead of a passionate zeal for the building of

Christ's Kingdom, and have therefore alienated all zealous and heroic souls and made our converts among the smug and the spiritually selfish.

You and I and all must repent, and having repented we must amend. Henceforth we humbly seek Christ's Presence and blessing, not that we may carry it off into a corner to enjoy as a dog does a bone, but that we may translate that blessing into a power of salvation to be put at the disposal of a world which we would fain lift up to Christ.

In that great effort and campaign we must spend our best blood. We shall learn salutary and uncomfortable lessons of self-sacrifice and self-forgetting, and probably of suffering too. But we shall be doing something worth a man's life and toil: we shall be engaged in the highest and noblest task ever entrusted to created beings. For we shall be marching under Christ's leadership to build God's Kingdom on earth; for that it is worth while to have lived, for that it is good even to die.

CHAPTER XIV

THE FUNDAMENTAL DIFFICULTY

THE deepest-rooted difficulty of all is that while people do not deny God they are not really interested in Him. In fact, shallowness is the prevailing evil of the day. Society is not definitely immoral nor anti-Christian, but the cares and pleasures of this life are so absorbing that men have no time for Him or themselves. So many live without ever discovering themselves. Life has been for them a succession of surface emotions, they have never faced the ultimate problems of which great souls are always aware.

Little social ambitions, dress, company, gossip: and, with men, eating and drinking, women, amusement, fill up all the spaces of consciousness; there is no quiet life of the spirit and no questionings of the deeper intuitions of the soul. Probably town-life has much to do with this: the firmament with its mysterious stars is dimmed by the foreground of street lamps; the vast solitudes of desert or ocean are not seen and therefore raise no questions. Town dwellers have to depend on the strength of their own intuitive perceptions, they are not helped by the

outward pressure of scenery. What must Elijah and St. John the Baptist have learnt from the endless vista of vast solitudes? Would they have been prophets if there had been for them a policeman and a lamp-post every fifty yards? So it is that dwellers among a herd are seldom mystics unless the place of solitude is supplied by loneliness or pain.

Hence a dominant note of to-day is the flippancy and surface-life of the multitude. What is really popular is the cheap and easy, which makes no demand in the deeps of the soul. The cinema and the revue, the petty popular art and the cheap sentimental music reflect very accurately the soul of vast numbers. It takes the sombre challenge of war to bring out into prominence a nobility which was always there, but was often almost obliterated beneath a mass of pettiness. It is not always the fault of people that things are so. Monotonous toil and continual drudgery necessitate some kind of frivolity as a most natural reaction. One most weighty argument for a working day of six hours is that it would give the mind time to think and the soul to reflect.

Therefore a Christian is bound to do the utmost to improve the physical conditions of life, because it is unreasonable to expect any depths of thought when the body is so wearied by monotony and labour

that its leisure must certainly be filled by a reaction of frivolity.

Any sailor will tell you the same; after action or a long period at sea, the one longing on arrival at port is for some kind of a spree. Even a chaplain feels that, overwhelmingly. And if you tie men and women down to everlasting monotony, what can you expect in return except a passion for pleasure at any price?

But granted—and we must fight for it—better conditions of labour and more leisure for workers, how is it possible to interest them in God to their own welfare and salvation? I see three ways only.

First, we must endeavour to make them think. In church, at the street corner, through books, we must reiterate the unchanging eternal questions: 'Whence do I come; whither am I going; what is my business here?' Personally, I have never found an audience, in church or at some crowded street corner, who did not hush into attention when these questionings were considered. For from these questions can be suggested the only answer that really touches the soul of man: 'We came from God; we go to God; our business is to do our Father's Will."

And secondly, our task is to remove from the minds of the people the false notions of religion which have taken so deep a root, and to teach the

true religion in their stead. They do firmly believe, some of them, that religion is teetotalism, or at least the rejection of all that is happy and pleasurable, others that it is simply a selfish desire to save your soul from hell by a more or less unmanly subservience to God.

Even among church-goers religion has been—as already pointed out—a mere piety or a personal search for salvation; how can you inspire men and women by a creed like that? Real men and women can only be inspired by something for which it is worth fighting and suffering.

Who can be enkindled by the thought of his own bare personal salvation? Unless you can extend the thought to cover the glory of God and the salvation of a universe, you will only enlist the selfish and the cowards.

Alas, what ground we have to recover! Shall we ever do it? Anyhow, there is no time to be lost; we must start at once. We must learn and re-learn religion as a building and a warfare—a fight against the monstrous evils of the world, and for the liberation of an enslaved and suffering humanity. Then we shall link the passion which fights against Prussianism into the service of a still wider campaign against all evil—both in ourselves and in the world; and we shall hitch the passion for the rebuilding of

a better and truer England on to a yet wider passion for the salvation of a world and the happiness of a universe. And the third thing we need is a great increase in the volume of prayer—the surrender of the will to God, the putting ourselves at His service, the asking for a blessing on mankind. We want a sufficiency of praying persons, so that the Spirit and all the angelic hosts can act upon the world through us. We deprive the world of the Spirit because we deny ourselves to be used by God. We are the appointed conduits of the Spirit, but we let ourselves be choked by sin and materialism, so that He cannot use us as means to help the world.

So we want praying people as channels of the Spirit. Let us all pray more and better: submit ourselves more unreservedly for the Spirit's use. Let us hope for more communities of men and women who shall give their lives to this work for mankind. For though I cannot bear the thought of communities who live the religious life simply to escape the vulgarity of the world or to gain a personal salvation, yet I can conceive nothing nobler than a body of men or women who consciously assume the burden of the world's needs and lift up those needs in perpetual intercession to God. God bless all who do this; may they increase and multiply in number and fervour, for they are the salt of the earth.

But whatever is our vocation, brethren of the clergy and laity, let us be up and doing; let us 'get on with the war.' A world is to be saved from sin, a world is to be constituted in righteousness, through a Kingdom which is to be built. That Kingdom already exists in the Person of Christ and in the persons of His holy and devoted followers. Among those followers are we, who, although so stained and feeble, are not outside His redeeming grace, nor yet entirely destitute of a longing for noble things.

Up then, and let us be going, there is no more time to waste. The world waits to be redeemed, and God waits on us. Christ is at the head of His hosts and calls each of us by name to follow. Burst from the bands of selfishness and let the finest thoughts of your heart prevail. Let us follow where He leads; suffer as He suffered; strive as He strove. Let it be your sufficient reward that you have worked at the finest work of the world; that in the army where God was Leader you at least have been a soldier. And if as a result of all your loss and toil something will have been added to the Kingdom you serve, you will at least thank God that you have not lived in vain.

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